

## **Venna Goodrich**

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Transcribed by: Ellen S. Kiever

Today is July 16, 2007. I am at the home of Venna Goodrich (3980 South 500 East, Vernal, Utah).

Ellen: Venna, would you start with the day you were born and tell us who your parents were.

Venna: I was born August 8<sup>th</sup>, 1921. My parents were Viola Watkins Goodrich and Charles Merrell Goodrich.

Ellen: Tell me a little about each of them and their families.

Venna: Mother was the next to the youngest in the family of ten. She had one sister, Leona, which was younger than she was. She married my dad in the Salt Lake Temple. They were married by Bishop Simper, and then they got on their team and wagon and go to Salt Lake to be married in the temple.

Ellen: Did she tell you how long it took them to go to Salt Lake City?

Venna: They went to Roosevelt the first day and stayed with her sister all night. They got to Strawberry the next day and then the next day they got to Provo. There was a train from Provo to Salt Lake. They got on the train and went up to Salt Lake City.

Ellen: They left their team and wagon in Provo?

Venna: They went to the temple. They were married here because they have to travel together and then they went to the temple to be married. Joseph F. Smith married them. She told me about that. Dad said the day he went through the temple, Grandpa Watkins went with them, Dad said he stood around out on the temple grounds waiting for them because Grandpa wanted mama to help him with some genealogy stuff after they got through with their marriage. Dad said he was so mad and a man come and asked him why he was loitering around there. He told him he was waiting for some people to come out of the temple. It made him so angry. I hated to have that feeling leaving the temple grounds. Grandpa wanted mama to stand a proxy for some of the women in the temple.

Ellen: You have a long history in this valley.

Venna: I was born right here on this corner. My mama was born right here on this corner. We have lived right here on this corner all our lives. My grandfather Watkins homesteaded this corner. A lot of the Goodrich's went to Bluebell, (Duchesne, Utah).

Grandpa Goodrich didn't like it there so he came over to Naples and settled there. I don't know if they homesteaded. I guess they did because they came early to the valley. They lived on the Highway 40. He lived north of the Naples Chapel about a half a mile or something on the right side of the road. His home burned. Grandpa and Grandma had both died before the home burned. Ashley was living there and the house caught fire and burned. He didn't get burned or anything, but the house burned up. My uncle inherited the place and he lived there for quite a while. My dad married mama and she had to stay here with her folks. He mother was crippled with arthritis. Grandpa went and got her and told her she had to come home. Grandma couldn't manage without her. When my mother got older she had trouble with arthritis also. We all inherited the arthritis problems, Ione and Ezma has it and I have it. It is a terrible condition. We manage.

Ellen: Tell me about you and your siblings.

Venna: I have an older brother, Junius, then me and then Clint then three younger girls. My brother moved to Salt Lake when he was first married. His name was Junius Charles Goodrich. He was named after Junius Hacking and my father. My aunt was working for the Hacking and she wanted my folks to name him Junius, so they did.

Ellen: Did your siblings do anything special during their lifetime?

Venna: My oldest brother, when he married, he moved to Salt Lake City. He got a job with Union Pacific Railroad. He lived there the rest of his life. His kids all graduated from the University of Utah. One of them teaches college over in University of Colorado. One of them lives back east in Maryland. He does some big thing, I don't know what and Eloise works for the Utah Valley College. He and his wife insisted that his kids have a good education, so they all graduated from college and have done well. They are all good kids. Eloise has one daughter. Louis and Kent have a couple of boys each. Kent teaches at the University of Colorado. He is a good funny kid to be around. I love him, he come here one day and said, "Aunt Venna, do you know something new?" I said, "No, I don't." He said, "I'm a member of the church." I said, "Oh Kent, you couldn't have told me one thing that could make me happier than that." He laughed and laughed. He said, "Well, if you're born in Utah and your friends are all Mormons and that is all your ever around then you've got to be a Mormon, haven't you? My brother married Lucy. She wasn't a member of the church, she still isn't. She believes just like we do. We talk religion but she is stubborn. Her mother would turn over in her grave if she joined the Mormon Church. Oh my word, they believe just like we do. They can't help it. It's the truth and they know the truth when they hear it.

Ellen: Does Kent have children?

Venna: He has a boy and a girl. None of them are members of the Church. Isn't that a sad business? I prayed for so long and I give up on them. I said, "Well, the Lord can't just answer my prayers and make them be members. They have to be members if they want to." They are good people and honest people and honorable people but they are not

members of the Church. I've about give up on them. I don't know about them becoming members of the Church. You never quite give up. They are good people.

Ellen: Tell me about you and your brothers and sister going to school.

Venna: We lived right here on this corner all out lives. We had a house behind this one right back here (to the West). It was a big old house that Grandpa built.

Ellen: Did it have two stories?

Venna: No, but it was real tall. The ceilings, we had to get on a table with a chair to wash the ceilings. It was a high house but it was a single story. We went down to Davis Ward to school. The school house was right where the Chapel is now (3990 South 1500 East). It was a mile down the street. We walked to school in the winter and the summer. If we got up in the morning and it had snowed three or four feet, Dad would hook up the team and take us in the wagon. He would pick up all the kids on the corner. There were the Smuin kids and the Watkins kids. Aunt Nellie Slaugh, she was a widow, lived over there. Linny Simper my first teacher. She was a marvelous teacher. Her name was Edna Phlinda Simper. She lived in the first house south of the Old Davis Chapel (4039 South 1500 East). It was where the Walter Simper Family lived. Bishop Simper lived where he always lived (3874 South 1500 East). Walter and Alfred were brothers. Walter never came to church, neither did his wife. They were good people. There was a family bust up between him and his brother and they did not get along after that. Bishop Simper was the Bishop and Walter never came to church. Verna Simper was one of my good friends all the way through school. She was a good girl. Her father was Walter. Linny Simper taught me in the first and second grade. She was a fantastic teacher. When they consolidated the schools and took the school away from Davis and all, she taught at Central School. She was an outstanding teacher. She taught school all of her life. She taught me and my brothers and some of my other family. She went over to Naples and then to Central. After that she went to Salt Lake City, then to California, and then back to Salt Lake City. She was still tutoring pupils when she died. Her family had a party for her in Salt Lake City and brother that lived in Salt Lake City for years, he went to the party. When he got there, she looked up and saw him coming in the door. She threw her arms in the air and ran over there and threw her arms around him. She said, "Oh, you've come to my party." She taught him in the first grade. She was the best teacher in the whole world. Everybody in the Ward thought she was the best teacher that ever was. She was one of my favorites. Stella Richards taught me in the fourth grades. Wanda Oberhansley taught me in the third grade. She was from over around Neola somewhere. She lived over here. I don't know where she lived. Some of the people that taught here lived with Slaugh's. They lived in the house by the school. Stella Richards was a wonderful teacher. She taught out here in Davis Ward for quite a while. My next teacher was Viola Pope. She was Lynn Pope's mother. She was a good teacher.

Ellen: You liked school.

Venna: Pretty good, I was a nervous hatty. I would get nervous and mama would keep me home for a day or so. I needed to settle down. I was nervous over everything. I still get nervous over things. I have always been a nervous person.

Ellen: You don't seem like that type of person. You have been in so many positions and callings from the church. I would have never known that about you.

Venna: I served longer a Stake MIA President than anyone ever was the Stake MIA president. Grace Manwaring went to Salt Lake City. She went to the church office where the records are stored. She checked the records. She said, "Venna, do you know that you have served longer than anyone that ever had the office?" I said, "No I don't." She said, "Well you did."

Ellen: Did she compare you with Bishop Simper?

Venna: Oh no. Bishop Simper served twenty-seven years as Bishop and then twenty-seven years as Ward MIA President. Bishop Simper was a stalwart of our ward. He was a good man. I taught the gospel doctrine class for twenty-seven years. He would come up to me after the class was over, well one of my aunts who didn't like me very well and she was mad because I taught the class. She didn't think a smart-aleck like me ought to be teaching that class. It ought to be an older person. She told the Stake High Councilman that came out here that all I did was stand up there and teach false stuff to the class. I met him in Ashton's and he said, "Venna, I understand you teach a lot of false doctrine." I said, "Who told you that?" He said, "Your aunt." I said, "O hell, she wouldn't know false doctrine if she heard it? It made me angry, you know. I said, "Now listen here! This was Victor Wilkins, I said I have Bishop Simper in my class, I have Lige Jackson in my class, I have Wilford Olsen in my class, I have Hy Slaugh in my class, all of them are in the bishopric. You think they would put up with me out there preaching false doctrine. He said, "No, I don't think so." I said, "Well, I know so. Aunt Jen wouldn't know false doctrine if she heard it. It might have been she wanted to get me out of there. She didn't succeed. I taught there for twenty-seven years.

Ellen: That is why you are such a stalwart of our ward.

Venna: Oh, I don't know about that. Anyway I learned more than anybody cause you have to study to teach. I taught my mother. She taught it for I did. The reason I taught it is one Sunday she said, "Venna, will you do me a favor?" I said, "What do you want me to do mom?" She said, "I cannot go to church tomorrow. I just don't feel good. I cannot teach my class. You'll have to teach it for me." I taught it for her for twenty-seven years." After I taught it for a week or two, Bishop Simper came to me and asked me if I would continue to teach it. After I taught it for a week or two Bishop Simper came to me and asked me to teach the class.

Ellen: Was your mother living while you taught the class all this time?

Venna: My mother was born right here on this corner. My mother taught that gospel doctrine class, I don't know how long she taught it. She taught classes all of her life. She was President of the Primary, President of the Relief Society and President of the MIA. She worked hither and thither. She worked all her life in the church. Grandpa Watkins was a very strong member of the church. Grandma Watkins was the first Relief Society President of the Davis Ward. She was a neighbor from Midway and they moved out here and settled on this place. His brother settled down where Uncle Ed (Watkins)(3820 South 500 East). He settled a half of a section and Grandpa \_\_\_\_\_ settled the other half. Aunt Ella Watkins was from Flordia. Uncle Ed met her while he was serving a mission in Flordia.

Ellen: Tell me more about your school.

Venna: The first grade went till noon and second grade went from noon to the end of the day. We only went a half of day in the first and second grade. When they went over to Naples they started going all day. I went to all my years to Davis Ward. I had Linnie Simper, Wanda Oberhansley, Stella Richards, Viola Pope and Peggy Goodrich. Peggy Goodrich taught me in the seventh grade. I was still in grade school in the seventh grade. In the seventh grade, they consolidated the schools. I went to town to school. I was in the eighth grade in town. We went to the north building on 6th West and 1<sup>st</sup> South first. They built the new Seminary building and we graduated from Seminary. We used to go down to the Tabernacle (Temple) for Seminary. There was a big room on the east side of the tabernacle for Seminary classes. We went everyday to Seminary. They started to have the Seminary classes in the new building before I graduated.

Ellen: Was this new building where the LDS Clothing center is now?

Venna: Yes, that was our new Seminary building. I graduated from High School in 1940. We went to the school and were on the stage. We had our exercises. We were mighty proud to graduate. I didn't go to college but I have taken I don't know how many college classes here. We had a program when I worked in the bank. We had college classes, we would go in the Director's Room. It was another room where the Director's met. We would go in there and have class's everyday until we finished the course. I don't know how many classes I took. I took a course in economics, one in bank management. I took lots of courses. They taught us banking.

Ellen: When did you go to work for the bank?

Venna: In 1950. I worked for Newton Brother for eight years. I made chinchies. I got Flora Watkins a job there. She didn't finish High School. Aunt Jen didn't encourage her children to attend school. Juanita (Watkins) went for twenty-seven days to high school. Norma was the first one of the family to graduate from high school. Anyway, I was working to Newton's. She asked if I could get Flora a job at Newton's. I told her if Flora wants to come with me I would ask them. She went to work at Newton's. I worked there for eight years. I went to work at the bank. Flora worked there for a long time. Then they

moved down to where the Standard Saddle Tree (449 East 100 South) was. She worked there for a long time.

Ellen: Did Flora work there until she retired?

Venna: They kind of went out business. I don't know how long she worked there.

Ellen: So you went to work at the Uintah State Bank.

Venna: Mr. Cheney was the manager of the bank when I went to work there. Ezma and Ione (sisters of Venna) worked there. I was still working a Newton Brothers. I had worked there for eight years. I went over there. Ione was going to quit. She told me to come over and apply for my job. I went in and talked to Mr. Cheney. He said, "If you can work like your two sisters we will hire you." I said, "Well, I taught them everything they know cause I'm older than they are." He laughed and hired me. I worked at the bank for thirty-five years. I liked it very well there. I liked Mr. Cheney and Mr. Walter Wooley. Archie Johnson was one of the people that I worked with. Mr. Wooley was a funny person. He was kind of over the book keeping, which is where I started. He would come in there and he and Vena Baker would really go to town. She was braver than I was. She would sass him back and tell him this and that. One day they fired her. I don't know if she ever told that to anybody. She got a little smart with Walter and Mr. Cheney fired her. She was a good worker. She was very honest and religious. One time, Rayma Adams (Hatch) she said something about working there. She asked me if I was relation to Jay Anderson. I said, "He's my cousin." Her sister, Lilas, married Jay. Jay was a good boy. Vena Baker spoke up. She said, "He is not one mite religious." I said, "Vena, why do you say that." Vena said, "He never goes to church." I said, "Well, maybe he doesn't go to church but his dad died when he was a little boy. He went to work as soon as he could get a job." My uncle ran a service station in town. He hired him when he was just a kid. He helped his mother and he was a good boy.

Ellen: So who was Jay's mother?

Venna: Maude Anderson. They judged people different than we did. Naples was quite a place. If you didn't go to church you were nothing. She said Jay wasn't religious. Jay didn't go to church but I'll tell you. He was a man in boy's clothing. He was raised in Naples. His mother was a Goodrich. His mother was my dad's sister. Jay was a good boy.

Ellen: What year did the Uintah State Bank become the First Security Bank? Do you remember that?

Venna: We always said the Mr. Cheney sold us. He sold the bank to First Security. Everything changed. We had to do all the saving in a different form and we had to do a lot of work to come up to First Security standards. I had worked there a long time and I was very familiar with the work. I liked it there. Walter Wooley was our boss at the First Security Bank, he was an old gizzard. Vard Openshaw was such a good person. He was such a little scrounger. He was a good worker. They liked him very well. The girls didn't like him very well. He was buddies with Walter Wooley. He and Bruce Watkins started

there and they were just kids. Bruce was very friendly with everybody and if anything broke down, they hollered, "Bruce, Bruce" and he would fix anything. Vard would make fun of Bruce. We didn't like Vard to make fun of Bruce. I liked Vard. He was a good person and a good worker. Bruce was always hoppin around doing everything. He could fix anything. When I worked at the bank we would eat our lunch at the Vernal Drug. That Vernal Drug was a good place. They had good food and the people that worked there.

Ellen: So after high school, you worked for Newton Brother, then the bank.

Venna: Well, I did work for other people before worked at Newton Brothers.

Ellen: What did you do for those people?

Venna: I worked for Nellie Gardner, she lived over here, in her home. Rosie Cook was expecting a baby. She was having trouble. She was in the hospital. They got me to go over and work for her. Bob and Rosie Cook, they lived the street. They were our neighbors. I went and worked for her for several weeks. Then I went to work for Newton Brothers making cinches. I like that job. I worked there for eight years.

Ellen: Tell me about the Newton's.

Venna: The Newton's were all gone except Isaac. He was almost blind. He had trouble seeing. He would come out of the office, behind the office he had his kitchen and his bedroom and all, and he would come out and sit in one of the plush chairs that they had there. He would go out and sit most of the day and talk with people. They had a shoe repair shop there and the saddle shop. Clive Hartle, he run the shoe repair shop. Duaine Soderquist run the saddle shop.

Ellen: That is how Duaine ended up in his saddle shop.

Venna: I went from Newton's over to the bank.

Ellen: Before we started you were telling me about your travels. Would you tell me again about that part of your life?

Venna: I got Grace Manwaring a job at the bank. Grace was working at the Vernal Express office. We worked there and planned our vacations together. We would go thither and yon. We went to the World's Fair up in Canada, to Montreal. It is clear over on the east coast.

Ellen: Did you go to Niagara Falls?

Venna: Yes, I thought it was fantastic. We went to Niagara Falls and there was a big building there that was called Niagara. It is where during Revolutionary War days, they had prisoner's there. It was quite a historical place that was. We went there and saw a lot

of stuff. Oh my, that Niagara River was one of the fastest flowing rivers in the whole country. It would go zooming and then go over those falls. They said that no one had ever gone over the falls and survived. They told us a lot of people tried it different way but didn't survive. I stood on the bank and watched everybody go under the falls. I did not want to go under there for a dollar. I am just a big coward. I have been on a lot of trips. Ezma come off her mission from Memphis, Tennessee. She went on a mission before she married Loren Reynolds. Her mission was in the East Central States. She filled and eighteen month mission. She worked in the mission office. They found out she had worked in the bank so they kept her in the mission office for seven months of her mission. She didn't want to stay there. She wanted to get out and be a missionary. Finally, they turned her loose and she was able to be a missionary. She got out in the mission field and she really liked that. She was down in Louisville, Kentucky was where the mission office was. She thought it was a beautiful spot. I don't know where all she served. She served in Memphis, Tennessee and other different places. She came home and went to work for the bank. Carter Oil Company, they knew Ezma from when she worked in the bank before, they found out that she was coming home. They wrote to her and asked her if she would come to work for them. Mr. Cheney got madder than a hornet, he said, "You're not hiring my girls away from me! She's comin' back here to work." They said, "Not if we can get her." But Mr. Cheney then wrote to her and told her that he was expecting her back to work at the bank. They was so good to her. She could not say no. She come back to the bank, she would like to have gone to work for Carter Oil, just for the experience, but she thought she owed it to the bank to come back there and work.

Ellen: You have served your own missions.

Venna: I never went on foreign mission. I served a stake mission in Bonanza. I served an Indian Mission in Randlett. I and Mae Jackson were called together out to Bonanza. We went out to Bonanza every Sunday. They finally called Lige Jackson, Mae's husband, as the Presiding Elder out there. He then took his car and drove us. They were good people. I liked her so well. We worked out there for a long time. They finally released me and kept them on. I served for over two years.

Ellen: Who were some of the people out in Bonanza that you served?

Venna: Les and Junita Ellsworth lived out there. Buhela and Earl Gurr, Lawrence and Zora Gurr, There was a whole camp of people out there. There were four rows of houses.

Ellen: There must have been thirty houses there. We got to go with my dad sometimes on deliveries of furniture or appliances out there.

Venna: They had a lot of people out there. We went out there and started Church, Sunday school. They weren't having Sunday school at that time. A lot of the people come in here for their meetings. They would come in for the weekend and either go to Davis or Jensen. We finally started having church out there every Sunday. There was this building were we would have our meeting. It wasn't a Chapel; it was a building for gatherings. We held our meetings, we had a lot of members [of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day



Saints] but we could not coax some of those members to come out to church. Me and Mrs. Jackson would go out there and hold church, I even taught a Priesthood lesson. We didn't have people to go around and we had two little boys that come and bless the sacrament. They sure was faithful to come. If we hadn't had them, we wouldn't have had anyone. The men would have to do it.

Ellen: What did you do for Relief Society? It was held during the week at that time.

Venna: We didn't go out for Relief Society. We went once in a while but not very much. They had organized Relief Society. They had Little Bonanza, they came over to church. Earl Gurr was put in a Presiding Elder at one time. There were different ones put in after we left. It was interesting.

Ellen: Earl is in the Care Center now.

Venna: I know. Beulah goes up and stays with him part of each day. She's my cousin. Her mother died. Her sister, Reva, is the same age as I am. Reva was five when Aunt Leona died; she was my mom's sister. Mama took those girls. Reva and Virgie was raised with me. Beulah went and stayed with Mrs. Jackson. Mae Jackson was her dad's sister.

Ellen: Then you worked over to Whiterocks.

Venna: I didn't work at Whiterocks, Grace [Manwaring] went to Whiterocks. I went to Randlett. Grace and Estel [Manwaring] served an Indian Mission to Whiterocks. We went down there every Sunday. I taught a Sunday school class. I taught a mutual class.

Ellen: Was this a branch of white people and Ute people?

Venna: We didn't have many Utes come. We did have a few. There were a few white people there that came. Leora Bowthorpe was my companion; we went over there every Sunday. We had Sunday school. We taught the little kids. One day we had the lesson and let them paint and stuff like you do, you know, one little boy said, "Good hell, teacher, this is mighty hard dam stuff." We had a good time there. We had mutual, we had everything. I said to Leora, "I'll do everything but work in the mutual." I had had it. I was on the Stake Board when they released me and sent me on the Stake mission to Randlett. I will not work in the mutual and guess what. They made me President of the MIA.

Ellen: So while you were President of the YWMIA for all those years, you had to accomplish a lot. What kind of things did you accomplish?

Venna: I don't know. We worked hard. One time, I come home, a hurryin', I got ready and went to Ranglely. We went to Ranglely, Tridell and all around the area. My dad said as I went out the door, "Well, sis come sometime when you can stop and visit." I went hither and thither. I worked and come home and went to Bonanza or Ranglely and to

Tridell. I went all over the world as we knew it. I was good for me and kept me out of trouble.

Ellen: I don't think that people are as committed now days.

Venna: I don't think some were committed then. We had one girl, she was called on a mission like we were and she got to dating a kid from over to Roosevelt and she practically quite coming. It was important that she find a companion, we were old maids when we started and we were old maids when we quit. We had a lot of fun.

Ellen: Tell me about your friends.

Venna: Oh my, I had Leora Bowthorpe as my companion in the Indian mission. Grace Manwaring was my friend in the stake mutual. As soon as I got off that Stake Mission, she called me, she was on the Stake Mutual Board, and she called me. Every time they would have a hard thing to do she would say, "Me and Venna will do that." I said, "You quit volunteering for me." We would do it. She and I didn't being old maids; we didn't have anything else to do. We would do all the hard stuff. I didn't mind it and it kept us busy.

Ellen: What about your friends growing up?

Venna: Down here in Davis Ward, my friends was Madge Jackson Gurr, Verna Simper. Verna moved to Salt Lake after we graduated High School. There was Erma Collier and Verna Simper. Reva Gillman, she lived with me, so she and I were friends. Aunt Jen's, Flora Watkins was my age. We had lots of friends in Davis Ward.

Ellen: What kind of things did you do?

Venna: We went swimming in the canal. We weren't supposed to. That was drinking water for everybody. One time we decided to sneak up in the field and go swimming in the canal. We were all in there a jumpin' around and swimmin'. Here come Bob Cook to see what was goin' on up there in the canal. He threw us right out of there. We weren't supposed to swim there. We was watchin' for the water master, he didn't come but Bob Cook did. Oh my! We used to go up there. That was Uncle John's [Watkins] field. We used to get a sleigh and go clear up to the canal. It sloped clear down to the fence down to the road over there. We would give ourselves a big shove and away we would go down to the road. We had a lot of fun sleigh riding over there and stuff. We had a long walk back with our sleigh but we would give another shove and go again. We went to school and walked to school.

Ellen: Did it snow a lot back then?

Venna: Oh yeah! We used to get a lot of snow. Over there in the field it would be a foot high. We would sleigh ride. Oh my! Oh my! Yes. We sleigh rode on the roads and the

canals. My brothers would go out and sweep off the canals and get their skates on and skate up and down the canal. They had fun doing that. We girls didn't have skates.

Ellen: You mentioned earlier about your dad hooking up the team and wagon when it snowed. How old were you when your parents got their first car?

Venna: Well, my parents lived here with my grandparents. My grandmother was very crippled with arthritis and grandpa went and got mama, brought her home and told her she had to come to take care of grandma. So this is where I was raised. Her sister died and she took care of her kids and we had a big family. It was good. We had good times. Grandpa got a car. My Grandpa Watkins had a son, his name was Phil Watkins, and he had a job in town working in a garage. He got a discount on cars if he wanted to buy one. He got grandpa a new Nash car. Everybody around thought that old man Watkins must be really wealthy. We was as poor as church mice, you know. They thought we were really wealthy because grandpa was driving that new Nash. Uncle Bill (Phil) got him this new Nash through his garage. Oh it was lovely! You should have seen us when we went to church. We had grandpa, grandma, mom and dad, and all of us kids and all of Aunt Jen's kids and Aunt Nellie Slaugh and anybody that we passed on the road. Oh everybody went to church with us. We would just stick them on. We had good fun when we were kids. We played and made playhouses. We did just any kind of thing to have fun. When I got out of High School, I wanted to find a job but I wasn't trained for anything. I went to work for Nellie Gardiner over the road. She was having some difficulty. I mopped her floors and did her washings and stuff like that. I worked for her for about a year. I worked for Rosie Cook

Ellen: How did they afford to pay you?

Venna: They didn't pay much. Bill Gardiner worked at the mine. Bob Cook just ran his farm. He did pretty well as a farmer. I don't remember what I made when I worked for them but when I went to work for Aunt Ella and Uncle Ed [Watkins] I made two dollars a week. I worked for them for nothing most of the time. When they did pay me it was two dollars a week. I was glad to get that, it was two dollars I didn't have. I kind of resented them a little bit; I would go down there in the morning and work all day. I would wash and iron, scrub floors and that kind of stuff. One day, Uncle Ed was laying on the bed, he was ill. I got through ironing and went to sit on the couch for a minute and he said, "Well, ol Lady Lu how are you today?" I said, "Pretty good." He said, "Yep, that's right, you're pretty and you're good." I said, "Well, that is exaggerating quite a little but I feel fine." He said, "No you're not exaggerating, you're pretty and you're good." I wasn't pretty in the fastest day of my life.

Ellen: Yes, you were and you still are.

Venna: Well, anyway we got along. I went down and did Aunt Ella's hair every Saturday of the world so she could go to church. Uncle Ed would come over there and he would talk and preach religion to me while I was doing her hair. He told me the story of Daniel a hundred thousand times. I said to mama, "Well, Aunt Ella called and has her hair ready

so I had better go down and put it up. If Uncle Ed tells me that story of Daniel I am going to wop him.” She knew I wouldn’t do anything like that. I got down there and I was doing Aunt Ella’s hair. Uncle Ed pulled up a chair and said, “Did I ever tell you that story of Daniel?” I said, “A few times, Uncle Ed.” Well, he started again to tell the story of Daniel. It was a good story. It was one of his favorites. I worked for them a long time. Then I finally got a job at Newton’s. I was glad to get a job without cleaning and washing clothes.

Ellen: Do you remember your pay rate you received at Newton’s?

Venna: We got so much a cinch for making them. I don’t remember. I know I went to work in the bank and I had to take a decrease in pay to go over there to work. I got seventy-five dollars a month when I first started at the bank. I made more than that over at Newton’s.

Ellen: What did Newton’s do with the cinches?

Venna: Oh my, they sold cinches all over the world. They sold cinches in Australia, Canada and in the United States. They finally started a shop in Texas. Ken Hadlock and others went down there and worked. I have never been there. Ken Hadlock was married to, well I don’t remember who, but she moved to Texas. After they got down there, she got a job in a store and she left him and they got a divorce. Everybody was so surprised because they had been together for a long time. I believe he married again.

Ellen: He did and they at one time bought a home out by our house.

Venna: Anyway, I have worked with a million people. When I worked at Newton Brothers we had girls from Roosevelt and all over working there. I worked with about ten or eleven girls upstairs. It was over across the street from the telephone office, there was big building there. It was next to the Vernal Express office. There were people who worked in the back of the shop that made saddle trees. They made bridles, halters and other equipment.

Ellen: There have been a lot of Davis area people that we have not been able to collect history on. Can you tell me anything about the settlement of this area?

Venna: My grandpa Watkins and his brother Jack Watkins, they settled this section, each taking half [3500 South to 4000 South and 250 East to 500 East?] They split the block in half. Jack didn’t like it out here and he went back to Heber City.

Ellen: Let’s draw a map.

Venna: Let me see. This is Edward Watkins Sr. and this was Jack Watkins original. I can’t remember because it has been bought and sold a few times. This has ended up being Edward Watkins Jr. and then Viola Goodrich inherited from him. Now, this is the way it

is today, this is still mothers, I live here. Edwin lived down the street. Doug Watkins lives in his place. He is a great-grandson to Edwin.

Ellen: Let's go across the street. Tell me who owned property across the street.

Venna: That was Aunt Ellie Slaugh, she was married to Isaac Slaugh. She was the mother of Henry, Angus, Minola, and Wilda. The girls don't live here. They moved away a long time ago. Angus lived uptown.

Ellen: Over on the corner where Rex and Betty Smuin live, who owned that property.

Venna: That was the Smuin's. Smuin's lived in the upper part and I don't know who lived in the lower part. Greenhow's and Ellifritz's lived down here. Do you remember Emma Smuin. She was married to John Smuin, his brother Sy Smuin never married. He lived with them. There was Sy Smuin and the Greenhow woman was a sister. That is how it all ties together. They [WHO] were the only people in the ward that were not members of the church at that time. They were antagonistic.

Ellen: Were the Greenhow's and the Ellifritz's members?

Venna: No. They used to have to come up here and get their mail because the mail didn't go down the street. Aunt Ellie Slaugh lived across from us my whole life until she died. Before she died she was moved to a care center sort of place. Slaugh's have lived out here forever.

Ellen: The first people came to the valley in the 1878.

Venna: When they came out here, my grandpa homesteaded this place and Isaac Slaugh and Ellie Slaugh lived there and I am sure they homesteaded that place. Where the Davis ward chapel is, across the street where Lyle Slaugh lived, his father homesteaded that place. I don't remember his name. The name wasn't Slaugh in the beginning, they say it was Crawford. Their name before they came to the basin from back east somewhere there were Slaugh's and the name was Crawford. Now this is just stuff I remember people telling about. Slaugh's lived here and down by the chapel. Slaugh's settled around here, John Slaugh lived over on the hill where the gulch goes down in the hill, where Clyde Ruppe lives now. A lot of Slaugh's came here. I don't know. Marv Jackson could have told us about these people.

Ellen: Have you ever received any awards or recognition of any kind?

Venna: I have been particularly unfamous. I did get an award or two at the bank, I don't remember.

Ellen: What do you remember about Vernal when you were growing up?

Venna: You know that I remember when we used to go to town in a buggy. Behind Ashton's store there were hitching posts where you tied up your horses. The doughboy was in the middle of town. I can remember when I was a kid; my Uncle John married Nora Karren. Her people lived over there along Highway 40 in that brick house. Stella Richards and her kids lived in that house across the street from Frank Merrell. They had an old man that lived down in Naples. He lived in one of the first houses past Frank Merrell's place. The Karren's lived over in that brick home. They said a man told them there would come a time when that road would go straight out and cross the nation. We had a hard time believing that but it has happened. That Highway 40 crosses the nation.

Ellen: That is kind of like the prophecy about the tabernacle one day becoming a temple.

Venna: I felt kind of disappointed when they made that Stake Tabernacle into a temple because they always prophesied that there would be a temple up there on the hill, you know as you come into Vernal. The Sale Barn used to be there.

Ellen: What else would you like to tell me, anything of interest?

Venna: They used to call this man that lived over here on Richen's corner over in Naples where Abner Richens lived. Brother Richens lived there. Brother Richens went around administering to people.

Ellen: I have heard that. What can you tell me about him?

Venna: My Dad was sick. Dad had pneumonia and they operated on him to drain his lungs out of his side because he was dying. They operated and there was a hole in his side and it was draining. Then they couldn't get it cleared up. So they operated again and had two drains in his side. He was very very sick. Brother Richens came and administered to him and, well I remember. Anyway there is a lot of different things happening in those days. They depended on administration a lot more than they do now.

Ellen: So did your dad get better?

Venna: Uh huh.

Ellen: Kenny Lind told me that I needed to get history from Hazel Olsen. She can tell us about Brother Richens.

Venna: Do you know Hazel Olsen?

Ellen: I don't.

Venna: Oh my, when I was on the Stake MIA Board I would visit Naples Ward. I would love to go and visit Naples. She was a marvelous teacher. She is just a marvelous teacher. Is she still alive? You ought to go talk with her. She is a marvelous person.

Ellen: Kenny told us that she would tell us about that old man Richens and how he used to go around the valley, he didn't actually call it administer, he was more onto the well maybe the witchcraft side of things. I don't know whether he goes to church or not.

Venna: You would like to talk with Hazel. She is a marvelous person. Call her, she will help you. Here sister, Vena Collier Baker, she is the same type of person.

Ellen: I feel bad for Arnold Baker right now, his health is not good. I don't think Vena is either. Is Vena older than Hazel?

Venna: No, Hazel is older than Vena.

Ellen: At the 120<sup>th</sup> Stake Celebration I noticed that Hazel looked very good. Vena and Arnold were not there so Evan [Baker] sat by his Aunt Hazel.

Venna: I worked with Vena in the bank. When I first started to work there she was working there. She was a character, oh bossy. Me and Elaine Wooley, we worked in there and she bossed us two greenhorns like we didn't have brain one. We let her.

Ellen: I will get this printed up and bring it back to you for corrections and additions. I am so happy to have been able to visit with you. I hope that you have enjoyed this as much as I have. Thank you very much.